

Shy Albatross *Diomedea cauta*: the first record for Tanzania

On 7 September 1985 an immature Shy Albatross *Diomedea cauta* of the nominate race was located in Mtwara (10°17'S, 40°11'E), south-eastern Tanzania. The bird had been caught by fishermen operating out of Msimbati and was offered for sale at Mtwara Market. It was photographed, but unfortunately not measured, and was later released at sea. The record has been accepted by the East African Rare Birds Committee.

The second East African record was of another immature at Mombasa just over a year later (Gichuki & Pearson 1987).

Acknowledgement

We wish to thank Mr R. Watt for bringing this bird to our attention.

Reference

GICHUKI, C.M. & PEARSON, D.J. 1987. A Kenyan record of the Shy Albatross *Diomedea cauta*. *Scopus* 11: 44.

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Migrant Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni* associating with plains game in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

During the Palaearctic winter, large numbers of migrant kestrels *Falco* spp. spend time over the grassland of the Serengeti plains, particularly during the period March–April when they are moving north (Schmidl 1982). The birds roost regularly in the few trees, both isolated ones and those on *kopjes*, that offer relief from the open plains habitat. They can be seen gathering at these sites at dusk, much in the manner described for larger roosts in Nairobi National Park (Smalley 1983) and on the Athi Plains near Kajiado (Taylor 1984), in Kenya. Huge concentrations are well known from wintering grounds in southern Africa (Siegfried & Skead 1971). The species is gregarious all year round (Brown *et al.* 1982).

During the day, the kestrels are often found alone or in small parties, beating over and hovering above the grassland in search of their insect prey. However, on 17 March 1987, on the medium grass plains north-west of Gol *kopjes* and in the shallow valley of the Esoit Ndiarkarta River, a large concentration of Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni* was observed feeding in association with a herd of Plains Zebra *Equus burchelli*. As many as 600 kestrels were wheeling over approximately 1500 zebras and I observed a number drop and successfully capture insects amongst the game. Two days later, the zebras had moved north-west along the Esoit Ndiarkarta to Sametu *kopjes* and were still attracting large numbers of kestrels.

Although a subjective observation, it seemed clear that the birds were attracted to the herds of migrant game—zebras and Blue Wildebeests *Connochaetes taurinus*—wherever they occurred in large concentrations. Lesser Kestrels have been described exploiting such associations before, e.g. feeding on grasshoppers disturbed by buffalos *Syncerus caffer* (Meinertzhagen 1959) and by a man walking (C.J. Vernon, pers. comm. to Dean & MacDonald 1981). The birds observed near Esoit Ndiarkarta were certainly exploiting similar opportunities and the congregation suggested that the foraging environment was a rich one.